

**Impact template (REF3a)**

<b>Institution:</b> Newcastle University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Politics and International Studies
<b>a. Context</b>

Our research has three principal types of impact:

1. It raises awareness, enhances understanding and provokes critical reflection about important social, economic and political issues among non-academic audiences.
2. It informs and shapes important debates in the public sphere.
3. It informs and influences the policies, strategies and practices of key political actors, including civil society organisations, political parties, statutory bodies, and government departments and agencies.

The five main audiences for our research are:

1. *The public.* Our research is presented directly to the public through lectures and talks as well as blogs, websites and Twitter. We are regular contributors to the Newcastle Café Politique and Café Philosophique and have co-ordinated a series of Café Politique talks on key ideas in political philosophy. We have popular staff research blogs, including Grayson’s *chasingdragons.org*, and recently (March 2013) launched *CSI-Newcastle* on the popular *e-IR* blog (<http://www.e-ir.info/category/blogs/csi/>) to discuss our research on culture, security and identity. In addition, we contribute to leading blogs and news media, including the LSE policy blogs and the Huffington Post. Our work is also presented to the public through traditional print and broadcast media, e.g. Randall and Clark regularly offer expert commentary on British politics for local and national media.
2. *Civil society organisations*, including think tanks and campaigning non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The French (IFRI) and German (SWP) equivalents of Chatham House and the Flemish Peace Institute have used Mawdsley’s research on European security policy (case study). Long’s research on the legitimacy of NGOs and the institutions of global justice has informed a review of current strategy by Save the Children UK as well as a core principles and processes document developed by Beyond 2015 (an NGO umbrella group promoting a successor to the Millennium Development Goals).
3. *Political parties, politicians and party activists.* The Scottish National Party has sought Clark’s advice on strategy at local elections based on his research on the introduction of the Single Transferable Vote (case study). Randall’s research on the strengths and weaknesses of the Conservative Party in the North of England led to discussions with party activists about the challenges facing the party.
4. *National and international statutory bodies.* The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council has used O’Flynn’s research on shared education (case study) while the Northern Ireland Equality and Human Rights Commission invited him to act as a policy advisor. Barr was invited to present his work on biosecurity and bioethics at the United Nations Biological Weapons Convention experts meeting.
5. *National government departments and agencies.* Ovadia has undertaken research on the political economy of the oil industry in Nigeria, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and shared with the Nigerian Government. Barr’s work has been funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Mawdsley’s research has informed briefings for the French, German and Icelandic defence ministries as well as European national armaments directors. O’Flynn’s research has enhanced understanding of effective consultation methods in the Department for Education Northern Ireland.

In addition, we have undertaken research of interest to supra-national authorities, such as the European Commission (e.g. Zito on new environmental policy instruments and Maloney on civil society and citizen engagement), and local authorities in the UK (e.g. Bell on local climate policies). We have also made submissions to Parliamentary inquiries based on our research (e.g. Clark on Scottish elections) and consulted for private sector organisations (e.g. Ovadia for Local Content Angola).

The range of our audiences reflects the diversity of our research across our three research groups: international politics; governance and political organisations; and political philosophy.

### b. Approach to impact

We have adopted diverse approaches to impact depending upon our target audiences, our impact goals, the character of our research and the particular networks, skills and preferences of individual researchers. We have developed and maintained relationships with users of our research in six main ways:

1. *High quality public engagement, which establishes an ongoing interest in our research among members of the public.* For example, *chasingdragons.org* has attracted more than 70,000 visitors from 126 countries since it was launched in May 2009, with many visitors returning regularly. Gills has been a regular speaker at public events organised by local organisations, including North Tyneside Fabian Society, Tyneside Left Unity and Transition Towns Newcastle upon Tyne. Randall has been a frequent contributor to local and national BBC TV and radio coverage of British politics (57 times since 2008).
2. *Presenting and disseminating research to policy actors and inviting them to participate in events and networks that we organise.* For example, McGahern leads a network studying policing in the Middle East that includes ex-police officers involved in police reform as well as representatives from Chatham House. Mawdsley co-organises a network on European Common Security and Defence Policy, which includes FCO, European Commission and European Parliament officials. Gills co-organises the Leverhulme-funded network, SouthGovNet, which includes representatives from NGOs based in the Global South. The Newcastle Jean Monnet Centre, run jointly by Politics and Law, organises regular workshops with non-academic research users.
3. *Advising research users on policy and strategy through both formal and informal channels.* For example, Clark was a member of the advisory board of the Electoral Reform Society Scotland's Democracy Max Programme. Grayson has offered informal advice to Transform Drugs Policy UK, a campaigning NGO, based on his research on the links between drugs and security policy. Gray has drawn on his research on marine protected areas to provide advice to SEAFISH, a non-departmental public body, which aims to promote the fishing industry in Wales.
4. *Involving research users in all stages of the research process to ensure that the findings of our research are relevant for them.* For example, Ovadia's research on local content in the Nigerian and Angolan oil industry and Routley's research on prisons in Nigeria are both being developed in consultation with local NGOs and the UK DFID. O'Flynn's research on education policy in Northern Ireland had all of the key stakeholders involved from the beginning of the project.
5. *Conducting research that is directly funded by non-academic research users, including think tanks and government departments.* For example, Mawdsley's research has been funded by the Flemish Peace Institute. Barr's work has been funded by the FCO and Ovadia's has been funded by DFID. Bell received funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for his work on local climate policies.
6. *Developing collaborative PhD studentships and Masters-level research placements.* For example, we have collaborative PhD studentships with Newcastle City Council (on local climate policy) and the Finance Innovation Lab (on reform of the UK banking system).

Practically, we have supported colleagues by providing time, money, training, mentoring and specialist support for impact and engagement work. Our workload model allocates all staff 40 hours per annum for engagement activities. School and Faculty funds, including School small bids (up to £1000 per person per annum) and travel funds (up to £1300 per person) and Faculty rapid networking and conference funds, may be used to support engagement activities and relationship building. For example, Clark's workshop for Scottish local election candidates was supported by small bids funding. The University provides media training, which has been taken by staff in Politics. We have used the annual Performance and Development Review process and Research Mentoring to help colleagues to think about how to increase the impact of their research. The University also provides support for knowledge exchange activities through the Research and Enterprise Services team.

Strategically, the University has identified three major societal challenges and invested in the development of new impact-oriented institutes to address them through engaged research as part of the University's core mission to be a civic institution. We are actively involved in the work of the

## Impact template (REF3a)

Newcastle Institute for Research on Sustainability (Bell, Zito) and the Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal (Philpott, Clark, Bell). At School level, we appointed a member of academic staff as External Relations Director to review and develop opportunities for more effective engagement with research users, many of which we are continuing to take forward (see section c). At discipline level, a key consideration when making new appointments has been the potential for candidates to engage with research users and contribute to our impact activities. (e.g. Clark, McGahern, Ovidia and Routley).

### c. Strategy and plans

We will build on our existing activities, relationships and infrastructure by more systematically learning from our own experiences and best practice elsewhere. We have several research projects at an early stage that have strong impact potential, including work on youth unemployment (Maloney's EU-funded project), internal security in Nigeria (Routley on prisons) and Israel (McGahern on policing protest), electoral integrity (Clark), NGO legitimacy and its implications for processes and priorities (Long), a European Common Security and Defence Policy strategy (Mawdsley), the development of deliberative forms of e-democracy (O'Flynn) and Russian soft power (Feklyunina). We are building strong relationships with research users in each of these projects and have sought to involve key users early in the research process.

We aim to provide support for all staff to identify and pursue the most appropriate approach to engagement and impact stemming from their research. Strategically, we have prioritised three pathways to effective impact:

- Provide more support for early- and mid-career staff to widen and deepen their networks of non-academic users so they can maximise the impact of their research over the whole of their career.
- Develop more funded research projects (with academic and non-academic funders) that have stakeholder input at the earliest stages of research design to increase both our research capacity and impact potential (e.g. Maloney's EU-funded project).
- Develop more collaborative and interdisciplinary research projects to benefit from the increased impact potential of more applied work and the experience of collaborative partners (e.g. O'Flynn's work with software platform developers on e-democracy).

We will support staff to pursue these pathways and other pathways to impact appropriate for their research through:

- Changes to the workload model (staff are allocated time allowances for impact-related work).
- Increased financial support (a new Engaged Research Fund to provide up to £500 per annum specifically for networking with non-academic research users).
- Additional training and mentoring (we are organising a new series of impact-related training workshops beginning with *Speaking up for Social Science* in February 2014 and we are identifying appropriate academic and non-academic 'impact mentors' for staff seeking to improve the effectiveness of their engagement and impact activities).
- More effective gathering and sharing of information about funding opportunities, user interests, potential collaborative partners and opportunities for engagement facilitated by the Politics Research Director and School Research Manager.

### d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies have benefited from our previous support for engagement activities and have informed our impact strategy going forward. The continuing impact of O'Flynn's work demonstrates the value of having non-academic stakeholders involved from the beginning of the research. This is a strategic priority for us in the future so we aim to ensure that colleagues have the time, resources and skills to develop new collaborative relationships with research users. The impact of Mawdsley's work demonstrates the value of building relationships with key users over an extended time. So, we have increased financial support for networking as well as beginning to develop more effective training and mentoring support. Clark's work exemplifies a more pro-active approach to impact: he identified a specific research project that had significant impact potential and we provided research assistance and financial and administrative support to maximise its impact. We will identify and develop more opportunities like this in the future.